AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

1.   (currently amended) A communication system for communicating business information from a first business to a second business, the system comprising:

a communication component free from a web service implementation and ~~an instant messaging component~~ configured to receive, as an instant message, a business information access request from the second business and generate an output based on the business information access request;

a data store storing business information corresponding to the business information access request; and

a data store accessing system accessing the data store based on the output from the ~~instant messaging~~ communication component.

2.   (currently amended) The communication system of claim 1 wherein the ~~instant messaging~~ communication component is configured to generate, as an instant message, a response to the business information access request.

3.   (original) The communication system of claim 2 wherein the business information access request is a data inquiry requesting data from the data store related to a business transaction, and wherein the data store accessing system is configured to access the data store by executing a query against the data store to retrieve responsive information responsive to the inquiry.

4.   (original) The communication system of claim 2 wherein the business information access request is a status request requesting status of a business transaction, and wherein the data store accessing system is configured to access the data store by

executing a query against the data store to retrieve status information responsive to the status request.

5.   (currently amended) The communication system of claim 4 wherein the communication~~instant messaging~~ component is configured to generate the response as a status response based on the status information.

6.   (original) The communication system of claim 2 wherein the business information access request is a data update request, and wherein the data store accessing system is configured to access the data store by updating the data store based on the data update request.

7.   (original) The communication system of claim 6 wherein the data update request is a quote-to-order request, requesting that information in the data store indicative of a quote be updated to be indicative of an order.

8.   (currently amended) The communication system of claim 2 and further comprising:
    an alternate response channel, other than instant messaging,
        wherein the communication~~instant messaging~~ component is
        configured to generate a response using the alternate
        response channel.

9.   (currently amended) A system for communicating with a remote business, comprising:
    a user interface component configured to display an
        indication of the remote business and a plurality of
        features corresponding to the remote business and
        receive a user input indicative of a selected feature

corresponding to ~~the~~ a business information request; and

a communication component free from a web service implementation and configured to transmit instant messages ~~an instant messaging component~~, coupled to the user interface component, configured to receive an indication of the business information request, generate the business information request as an instant message, and transmit the instant message to the remote business.

10. (original) The system of claim 9 wherein the user interface component is configured to display one of the plurality of features as a business transaction status inquiry.

11. (original) The system of claim 9 wherein the user interface component is configured to display one of the plurality of features as a data manipulation feature for manipulating business data at the remote business.

12. (original) The system of claim 11 wherein the data manipulation feature comprises a quote-to-order feature for converting a quote to an order.

13. (currently amended) The system of claim 9 wherein the ~~instant messaging~~communication component is configured to receive a response instant message from the remote business, responsive to the business information request.

14. (original) The system of claim 13 wherein the user interface component is configured to display the response instant message.

15. (currently amended) A computer implemented method in a first business of communicating with a second business, comprising:

>   receiving an instant message through a communication component free from a web service implementation indicative of a data access operation requested by the second business;

>   generating a data store access operation request based on the instant message received; and

>   performing the data access operation on a business data store at the first business that stores business data related to the second business.

16. (currently amended) The method of claim 15 and further comprising:

>   sending an instant message through the communication component to the second business indicative of performance of the data access operation.

17. (original) The method of claim 15 wherein the data access operation comprises an information request and wherein generating a data access operation request comprises:

>   generating a data store query based on the information request.

18. (original) The method of claim 17 wherein performing the data access operation comprises:

>   executing the data store query against the business data store.

19. (original) The method of claim 15 wherein the data access operation comprises a status inquiry requesting status of a business transaction, and wherein generating a data access

operation request comprises:

    generating a data store query based on the status inquiry.

20.   (original) The method of claim 15 wherein the data access operation comprises a data update operation to update data in the business data store, and wherein generating a data access operation request comprises:

    generating a data store update request based on the data update operation.

21.   (original) The method of claim 20 wherein performing the data access operation comprises:

    executing the data store update request against the business data store.

22.   (original) The method of claim 16 and further comprising: sending a responsive communication to the second business through an alternate communication channel.